

## Riot Batons

**The riot baton is an invaluable weapon in crowd control situations.** Except for extremely violent crowds, the baton in the hands of well-trained troops is the most appropriate weapon. The riot baton is not meant to replace the rifle as the main weapon used by control forces. Rather, the riot baton is used in situations in which the rifle is not needed. The presence of rifles, with or without bayonets, tends to escalate the intensity of a civil disturbance. And unlike the rifle, the loss of a baton to the crowd does not present a serious threat.

Most control forces are armed with riot batons. This very versatile offensive weapon can be from 26 to 42 inches long. But the optimum length is 36 inches. The baton is made from any dense hardwood like rosewood or walnut that does not shatter or break easily. Both ends of the

baton are rounded to prevent unnecessary injury. The suggested diameter of the baton is 1.25 inches. A hole is drilled 9 inches from the grip end. The wrist thong is inserted through the hole. Either one or both ends of the baton should have a series of rounded ridges to aid gripping.

### EMPLOYMENT

The use of the baton is based on the commander's appraisal of the situation and his choice of a force option. Units committed with the baton must have marksmen and riot control agent teams in direct support. If the confrontation is intense, the commander also may elect to have reserve forces with rifles or shotguns, with or without bayonets, positioned for rapid reinforcement.

The riot baton is used by units that are employed defensively to protect people and property. During the termination phase of the disturbance when the violence has subsided and is expected to stay that way, troops are in a defensive posture. They may be equipped with the riot baton to perform their tasks.

The riot baton can be used in offensive crowd control formations. It can be employed so that the unit confronting the crowd is equipped with rifles and bayonets. Or it can be employed so that the element

in direct contact with the crowd is equipped with batons, and the supporting element is equipped with rifles and bayonets.

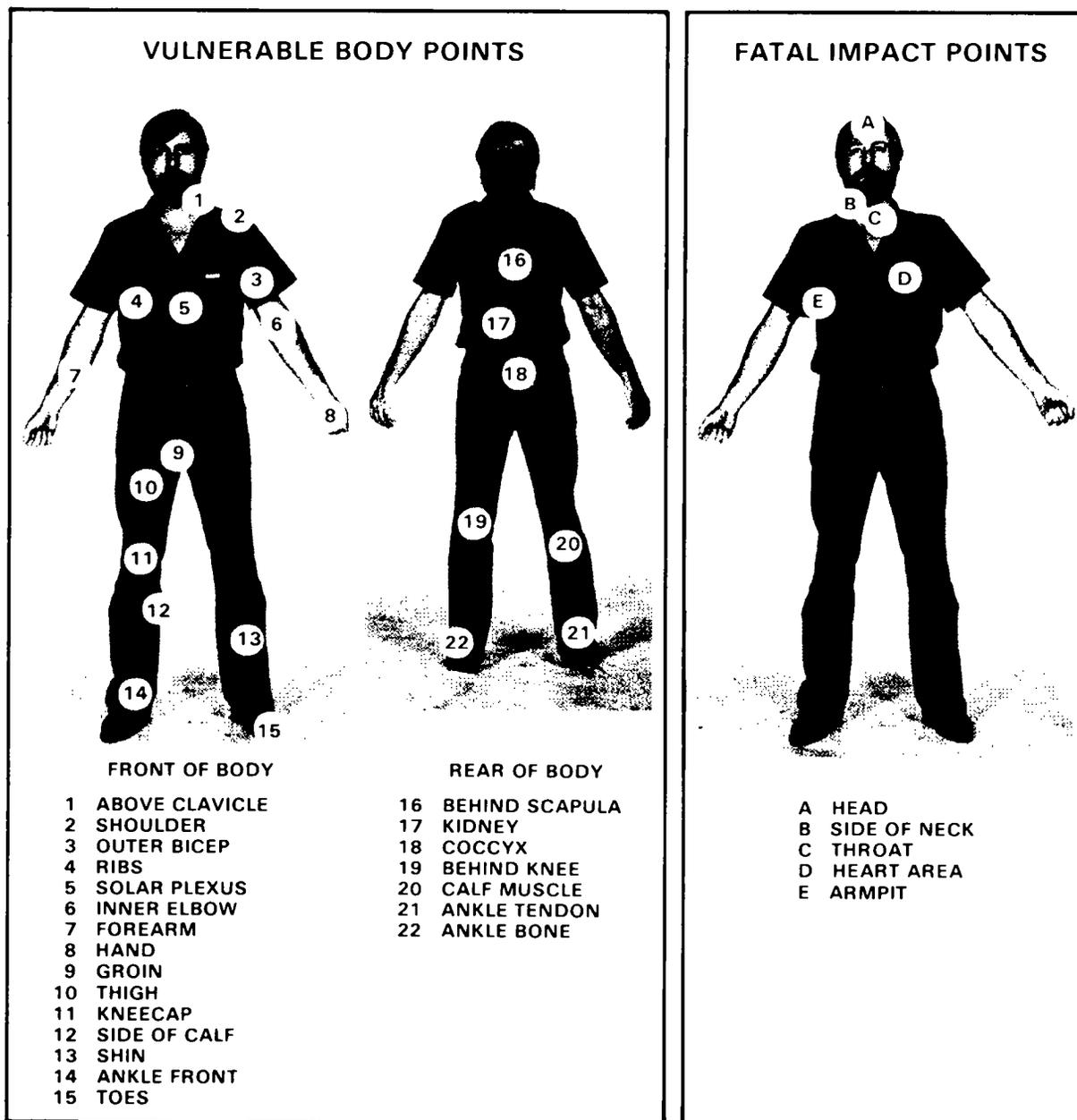
The riot baton is never the only weapon available to control forces. An element deployed with riot batons must have a marksman as a precaution against snipers. Reserve forces with rifles and bayonets must be available for immediate employment. The commander must be able to withdraw the riot baton elements, issue them other weapons, and redeploy them as a ready reserve force.

The riot baton, in the hands of trained troops, is a formidable weapon. But it must be used in conjunction with other measures to be most effective. The soldier who is skillful in using the riot baton can adequately cope with most situations that require physical restraint. Troops must be trained with the riot baton to the point that they use the various techniques automatically.

Troops using riot batons must have a thorough knowledge of the vulnerable points on the human body. Troops must deter, discourage, or disperse individuals threatening their position. But they must try to avoid blows that could kill or permanently injure.

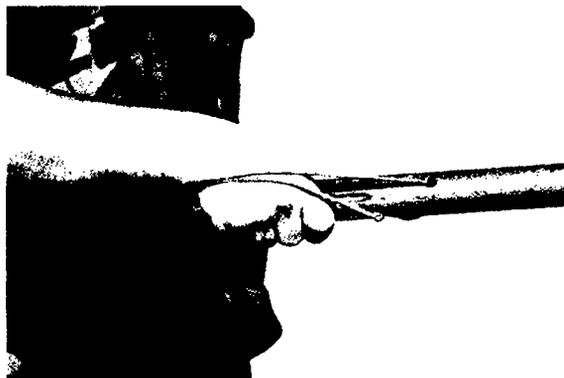
When deployed, troops usually avoid any riot baton techniques that could result in

death or permanent injury. The riot baton is *never raised above the head* to strike an adversary in club fashion. Not only is this likely to cause permanent injury, it also projects an unfavorable image of the control force. Also, the soldier is vulnerable to an attack on his rib cage when his arm is raised.



## BATON GRIP AND POSITIONS

Three steps are necessary to obtain a secure grip on the riot baton. First, the thong of the baton is placed around the right thumb. Then the baton is held so the thong hangs over the back of the hand. Finally, the hand is rolled into the baton handle so that the thong is pressed into the palm of the hand. This method of gripping the baton provides a secure grasp. The baton can be released quickly by simply relaxing the hand.



### PARADE-REST POSITION

Parade rest is the relaxed ready position. The feet are shoulder width apart. The left palm is facing out. The right palm is facing in toward the body. The hands are approximately 6 inches from the ends of the baton.



## PORT POSITION

The port position is a ready position. It is particularly well suited for individual defense. The right hand and forearm are parallel to the ground. The left hand is level with the left shoulder. The striking end of the baton bisects the angle between the neck and the left shoulder. The baton is held approximately 8 inches from the body. The feet are shoulder width apart.



## ON-GUARD POSITION

The on-guard position is the ready position. It should not be maintained for long periods of time because it is tiring. To assume the position, the left foot is placed forward of the right foot. The feet are spread apart, and the knees are slightly bent. The right hand and the butt end of the baton are placed snugly against the hip. The body is bent slightly forward at the waist. The left arm is bent so that the forearm protects the soldier's throat area, yet allows a thrust to be made.



## OFFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

Control forces use one of four techniques when employing riot batons in offensive operations. They perform the short thrust, the long thrust, the butt stroke, or the baton smash.

### SHORT THRUST

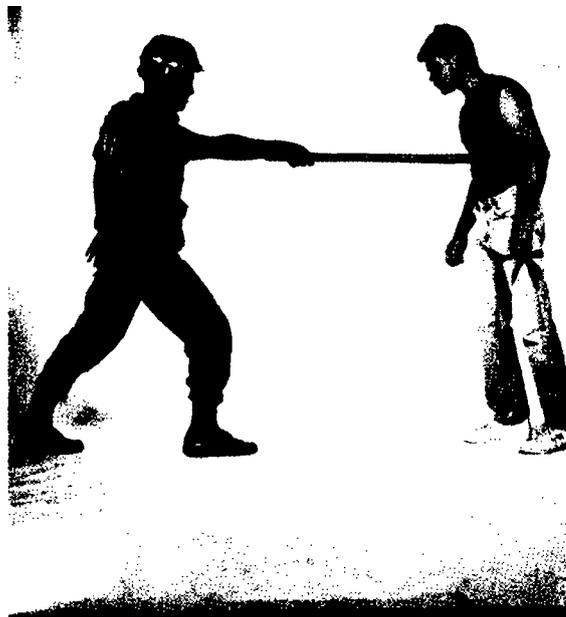
The short thrust is made from the on-guard position. The body is thrust forward rapidly by advancing the left foot. The left arm is snapped straight, driving the striking end of the baton into a selected vulnerable point of the opponent's body. The soldier must never direct the thrust directly at the central throat area because it can cause permanent injury or death. The soldier returns to the on-guard position after delivering the short thrust.



### LONG THRUST

The long thrust is made from the on-guard position. The body is thrust rapidly forward by advancing the right foot. The baton is held in the right hand. The baton

is snapped forward, driving the striking end of the weapon into a vulnerable point of the opponent's body. The soldier returns to the on-guard position after delivering the long thrust.



### BUTT STROKE

The butt stroke is delivered from the on-guard position. The right hand is elevated until the baton is almost parallel to the ground. The butt stroke is made by advancing the body rapidly off the right foot. The right arm is snapped straight. The butt end of the baton is driven to the left, striking the opponent's shoulder, chest, or jaw. The left hand is kept even with the left shoulder. The butt stroke may be fatal to the opponent if either the side of the neck or the head is struck. After delivering the butt stroke, the soldier returns to the on-guard position.



smash is executed by advancing the left foot rapidly. Both arms are snapped straight, smashing the length of the baton across the opponent's chest. After delivering the smash, the soldier returns to the on-guard position.



**BATON SMASH**

The baton smash can be delivered from the parade-rest, the port, or the on-guard positions. The baton is held horizontal to the ground, approximately chest high. The

## DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

In some situations, troops may have to employ the riot baton to defend themselves. They may have to defend against armed or unarmed attackers. The defensive techniques enable troops to defend against blows to the head, jabs to the body, stabs, and hand holds.

### DEFENSE AGAINST BLOWS TO THE HEAD

To defend against a blow to the left side of the head, the soldier starts from the parade-rest, port, or on-guard position. He smartly snaps the left hand to the left side of the body and the right hand up and to the left. The baton is then in a nearly vertical position that blocks the opponent's blow.

Immediately after blocking the opponent's blow, the soldier snaps both arms up and level with the baton. The left hand is near the left shoulder, and the right hand is in front of the left shoulder. The grip end of the baton is pointing towards the opponent. The soldier is now in position to execute a jab or a smash. The body is

driven forward. The right hand is snapped straight, driving the grip end of the baton into the opponent's upper body, avoiding the head. After delivering the jab or smash, the soldier returns to the on-guard position.



## DEFENSE AGAINST BACKHAND BLOWS

An opponent's backhand blow can be blocked from the parade-rest, port, or on-guard position. Both arms are snapped out and to the right front of the body. The left hand is raised above the right hand so that the grip end of the baton is pointing down. This position blocks the opponent's blow. After blocking the opponent's blow, the right hand is brought up near the right shoulder. The left hand is moved down and to the front of the chest. The striking end of the baton should be pointing slightly to the left front and toward the opponent. The soldier is now in position to execute the butt stroke. The body is rapidly advanced off the right foot. The right hand is driven forward and to the left. The left hand is held in place as the baton is driven against the opponent's shoulder, chest, or jaw. This blow can result in a fatal injury if any other area of the head is struck.



## DEFENSE AGAINST THE LONG THRUST

The long thrust can be countered from the parade-rest, port, or on-guard position. The left hand is moved toward the left. The right hand is moved smartly down and toward the left. The opponent's weapon is engaged and deflected to the left and away from the body. As soon as the opponent's weapon has been deflected, allow the left hand to slide down to the right hand. The body and baton are now in position for a counterblow against a vulnerable point.



## DEFENSE AGAINST OVERHEAD STABS

This defensive technique can best be accomplished from the parade-rest, port, or on-guard position. As the opponent stabs down, the body is moved to the rear by withdrawing the left foot. The left hand is allowed to slide down the baton to the right hand, and the baton is raised up over the left side of the body. The baton is brought down and snapped against the opponent's wrist or forearm, disarming him. After disarming the opponent, the left hand is slid back up to its original position on the baton, ready to execute the baton smash.





opponent drops his weapon, the soldier brings both hands up close to his shoulders. The baton is held across the chest. The counterblow is delivered by moving forward with the right foot and executing the baton smash.

### DEFENSE AGAINST THE UPWARD THRUST

The upward thrust can be blocked effectively from the parade-rest, port, or on-guard position. The riot baton is brought quickly to a position parallel to the ground, about 6 inches away from the lower chest. Both arms are snapped straight down, driving the length of the baton downward to strike the opponent's wrist. As the



Once an opponent has been disarmed, he must not be allowed to recover his weapon. Any blow delivered to a vulnerable point of the body is effective.



## DEFENSE AGAINST AN UNARMED ATTACKER

The riot baton is extremely effective when used against an aggressive or violent person. These defensive tactics may be performed from all three basic positions. The body is moved slightly to the rear by withdrawing the left foot. The left hand is slid down the riot baton to the right hand, and both hands are brought up to the left shoulder, the baton parallel to the ground. Against an opponent's left-handed blow, the soldier delivers a counterblow to the opponent's collar bone or shoulder. Against an opponent's right-handed blow, the soldier delivers a counterblow to the opponent's forearm.

If a soldier is grabbed by an opponent, the baton can be effectively employed as a defensive weapon. The baton can be jabbed into the groin or stomach of the opponent.

